



# Falls of Neuse

## Area Plan Update

### Kickoff Meeting: Public Input Summary

#### Overview

The kickoff meeting for the Falls of Neuse Area Plan update took place at Durant Middle School on Wednesday, May 24. The City publicized the event through emailed notices to city newsletter subscribers, social media including Facebook and Twitter, on the project website, and on signs posted along the corridor. The City also encouraged members of the project confirmation group to spread information on Nextdoor and similar means. Approximately 70 people attended the event.

#### Meeting format and process

The meeting began with a 20-minute presentation about the plan scope and goals (in terms of questions to be answered by the planning process) and current conditions (physical and policy/regulatory) in the plan study area. Attendees then split into small groups (roughly eight per table) for facilitated discussions regarding strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in the area. Each table had a base map of the area and maps showing current zoning and the city's Future Land Use Map for the area.

Input was provided geographically (by placing dots on maps) and in list form. After a 40-minute discussion/work period, each group then presented the primary issues and opportunities they had identified. Additional input was gathered in the form of a visual preference survey that could be done either before or after the formal meeting. The survey included 18 photographs showing various uses and building types. Participants placed dots on any types they found desirable for the study area.

#### Summary of input

Following the meeting, each list and map was digitally scanned. The raw information gathered has been placed on the project website (<https://www.raleighnc.gov/business/content/PlanDev/Articles/LongRange/FallsofNeuse.html>) and is summarized here.

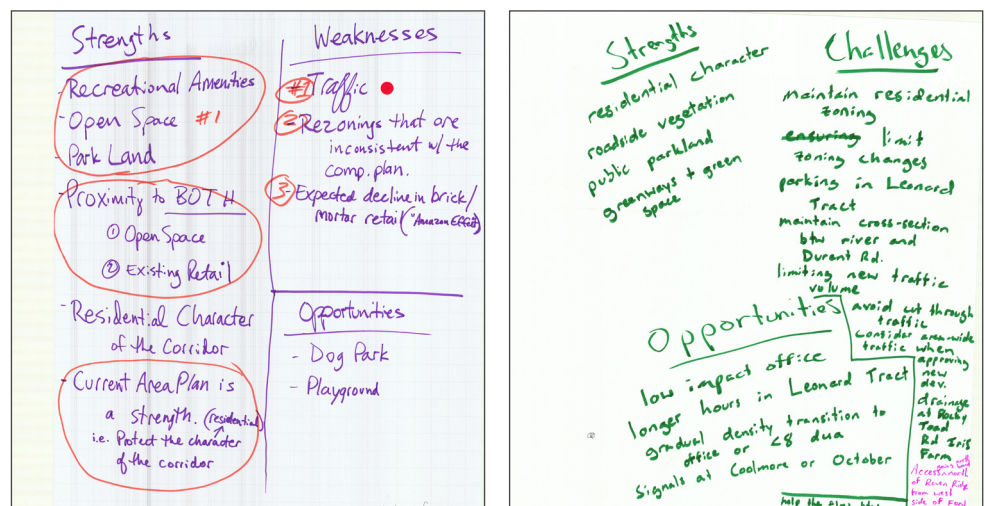
#### Written issues/opportunities

This is a compilation of lists created at each table, with each different issue mentioned below. Many items on the list, such as greenways (strengths) and traffic (weaknesses) were mentioned multiple times, but are only mentioned once here, as this is intended simply as a means of covering the range of issues mentioned.

##### Strengths:

- Greenways
- Neighborhood aesthetics
- Existing Area Plan
- Natural resources
- Publicly owned natural areas

#### Examples



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#### **Strengths (continued):**

- Recreational opportunities
- Neuse River
- Sense of community
- Single-family pattern of development
- The corridor in general is scenic and traffic does flow
- Roadside vegetation
- Public parks
- Older residential neighborhoods
- Church
- Historic homes
- Planned senior housing
- Current width of Raven Ridge Road
- Current grocery store access
- Falls Lake Dam
- WakeMed North Hospital

#### **Weaknesses/Challenges**

- Traffic
- New light poles are too bright
- Maintain residential zoning
- Parking at park/recreational facilities along Neuse River
- Maintain current cross-section between River and Durant Road
- Limit new traffic volume
- Drainage in some areas
- Accommodating people on bicycles at Raven Ridge
- Watershed/runoff issues
- Scape of potential development
- Traffic safety on Falls of Neuse
- Possibility of large-scale commercial development on undeveloped parcels
- Decline in traditional brick and mortar retail
- Do not want to see connection between King's Crest and Falls of Neuse or Raven Ridge roads
- No retail along the corridor
- Subsidized housing
- Declining property values if retail allowed

#### **Opportunities:**

- Senior living
- Raven Ridge (development in character of area)
- Create an identity based on recreational opportunities
- Change FLUM to residential
- Active recreation
- More bike/ped connectivity



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#### Opportunities (continued):

Outdoor performance space/park development on city-owned property adjacent to river  
 Protected bike lanes  
 Public space  
 Maintain watershed protection  
 More engagement with Neuse River (whitewater park)  
 Low density office and retail on undeveloped sites  
 Signals at additional intersections  
 Multifamily residential at Raven Ridge  
 Historic designation for Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church  
 Restaurant at/next to bicycle shop on Old Falls of Neuse Road  
 Prefer residential on larger parcels just north of High Holly Lane  
 Larger parcels between Tabriz Point and Lowery Farm Lane should remain residential  
 Pocket parks in new development  
 Medical office development  
 Walking trails/walkability in residential (ADA accessible)  
 Improve crosswalks at the pedestrian signal on Falls of Neuse Road and at Falls Lake Dam  
 Additional signals on Falls of Neuse  
 Raven + development at Raven Ridge/Falls of Neuse  
 Residential/office uses at lower heights  
 Low-intensity mixed-use  
 Neighborhood-serving retail  
 Dog park

#### Mapping exercises

As mentioned above, in conjunction with creating lists of issues and opportunities, participants also coded many of the issues geographically as follows:

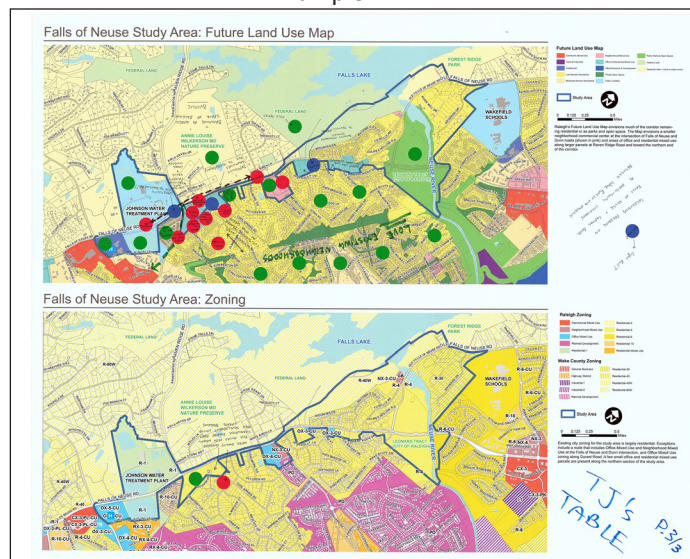
- Strengths/places to preserve/enhance – green dots
- Weaknesses/challenges – red dots
- Opportunities – blue dots

Summarizing this geographic input briefly is more difficult (all of the scanned maps, however, are available for viewing), as participants placed dots on a broad range of areas, but some patterns did emerge.

#### Neuse River/surrounding publicly-owned properties:

These areas received substantial numbers of green dots (indicating a desire to preserve the existing resources) and blue dots (indicating a desire in some areas to develop additional park or recreation opportunities or to provide increased access, such as in the form of additional parking). These results are not necessarily in conflict with one another.

Example







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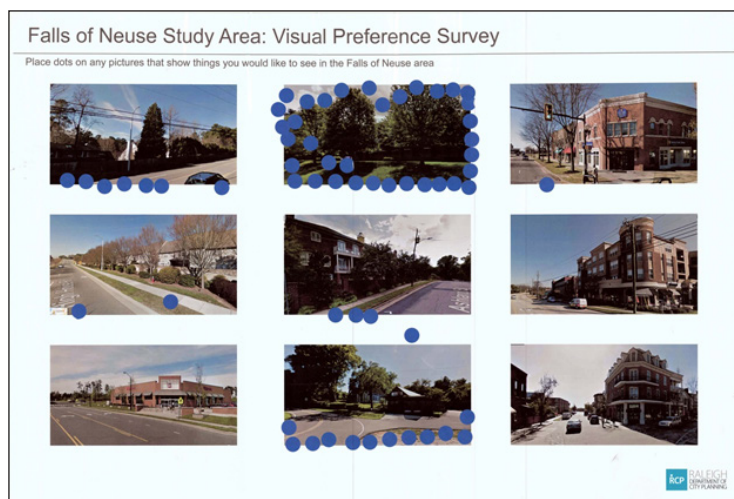
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**Undeveloped tracts:** The area includes several undeveloped parcels, including a 17-acre site at Falls of Neuse and Raven Ridge roads and a roughly 4-acre site at Falls of Neuse and Dunn roads (two larger parcels adjacent to this area are currently vacant but are the subject of site plans for a retirement center). A group of smaller parcels on the southeast side of Falls of Neuse Road between Tabriz Point and Lowery Farm Lane falls into this category as well. Generally speaking, these also received a mix of green dots (in some cases, specifically labeled to indicate that the dots indicated residential development/character, not no development) and blue dots.

**Falls of Neuse Road:** The road corridor itself largely received red dots. These were generally labeled as representing traffic conditions and were often located at major intersections.

### Visual Preference Survey

This exercise involved asking participants to place dots on development types they would prefer to see along the corridor. The results are shown below:



The results tend to indicate a preference for residential uses or forms (such as a house converted to office, or designed in a residential style/scale) or small-scale commercial uses. Images receiving larger numbers of dots included images of detached housing (one image showed detached housing, and participants drew in another image showing detached housing on the grouping of images above on the right), two-story townhouses, and a small existing retail business in the Falls of Neuse study area.

An additional image that received a large number of dots (top center on the grouping above on the left) showed an office building behind heavy landscaping. It is not necessarily clear whether the preference indicated by the dots on that picture was for the office use, the heavy landscaping (the office may not have been apparent to some participants) or both.



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#### **Participant Feedback**

Attendees received cards asking for feedback on the meeting. Of the 46 participants who responded, 40 indicated that the meeting had provided a good opportunity to shape the plan update; another five withheld judgment. All but two indicated they were likely to attend another meeting on the topic, and all but six said they were very likely to do so.